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AUTHOR Lee, Glenda E.
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ABSTRACT

Student characteristics and educational destinations of all the reverse transfer students from five state universities who were admitted to five community colleges during one calendar year (N=459) were studied to re-assess and define the "retread function" of community colleges. A group of 245 native community college students were randomly selected for comparison purposes. The reverse transfer students were found to be very much like the native community college students in most characteristics. They did have slightly higher high school grade point averages and slightly higher scores on college entrance examinations. However, no larger percentage of them remained in college to complete an educational program, fewer of them enrolled in two-year occupational programs, and about the same number returned to the four-year college as entered for the first time from a community college. Recommendations are made for dealing with the unique problems of the reverse transfer student in the areas of re-admission procedures, counseling, academic reinforcement, and inter-school communications. It is the author's view that the community colleges have failed to effectively perform their "retread function;" in fact there is some doubt whether community colleges recognize the "retread function" as part of their institutional mission. (Author/AH)

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REVERSE TRANSFER

THE "RETREAD FUNCTION" OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A.E.R.A./S.I.G.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE FOLLOW-UP AND

INSTRUCTIONAL EVALUATION STUDIES SESSION

APRIL 1, 1975

DR. GLENDA E. LEE
ASSOCIATE DEAN
MIDDLESEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BEDFORD, MASS.
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SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS OF
REVERSE TRANSFER
THE "RETREAD FUNCTION" OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

This study of reverse transfer students was made to emphasize the need for higher education institutions to recognize their responsibility for advancing educational opportunity for all students who possess aspirations and qualifications for future education. It demonstrates what happens to students who have been selected as having the necessary qualifications to succeed in four-year colleges but who for various reasons, change to two-year colleges.

The reverse transfer students were found to be very much like native community college students in most characteristics. They did have slightly higher high school grade point averages and slightly higher test scores on college examination testing programs. However, no larger percentage of them remained in college to complete an educational program, fewer of them enrolled in two-year occupational semi-professional programs and about the same number returned to the four-year college as entered for the first time from a community college.

A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS.

1. Over fifty percent of the reverse transfer students in this study left college without completing a program after attending both the four-year and two-year college.

2. The mean community college G.P.A. of the reverse transfer students who left was 2.50.

3. Four-fifths of the students had been in academic difficulties at the university, but less than one-fifth had had academic difficulties at the community college.

4. Forty-two percent of the total group (459) had been dismissed from the university and twenty percent were on academic probation.

5. Twenty percent of the reverse transfers were on "clear status" at the university and eighteen percent were in a "no action" group. (The "no action" group was designated on the basis that no record of dismissal, probation, or clear status was indicated on the transcript, but the student had below a 2.0 G.P.A.)

6. Less than one-third of the total group who left the university returned to a four-year college after attending a community college.

7. Three-fourths remained in transfer programs and only one-fourth changed to two-year occupational programs.

8. Fifty-seven percent of the reverse transfers were males.

9. The females who comprise forty-three percent of the total had higher academic records than the males, but showed less persistence in transferring back to the four-year college or university.

10. Eighty percent of the total group were single, and fourteen percent were over 25 years of age.

RECOMMENDATION.

Many factors contribute to the limitations placed on any study of reverse transfer students. Perhaps, the greatest obstacle is the lack of identification or attention to the students who have attended another college prior to admissions to the community

college. Thus, the following recommendation are made.

1. The admission's office or the registrar's office should mark each applicant's folder so that the reverse transfer can be easily identified and studied.

2. A systematic procedure should be established so that reverse transfers' records are easily retrievable.

3. A log of reverse transfers should be kept giving characteristics on which various surveys can be made.

4. The registrar should evaluate all transcripts for students from former colleges between the time the reverse transfer is admitted and the time he is registered for the first time.

5. Each reverse transfer student should be sent an evaluation of former college credits prior to his enrollment.

6. Continuous studies should be made to determine the progress, persistence, and needs of reverse transfer students.

Because reverse transfer students may have unique problems in educational planning, there are certain counseling needs that may be necessary. The recommendations relating to the counseling and personal development of these students are.

1. During the orientation period, either in the summer or early fall, reverse transfers should be brought together in groups to become acquainted and to communicate their needs.

2. Counselors should plan with these students both in groups and individually their future educational programs.

3. Reverse transfers should be given career and life planning assistance with emphasis on re-evaluating their goals and establishing realistic objectives in reaching their goals.

4. Special counseling should be arranged for the females to bring their awareness of future opportunities more in line with emphasis on higher education for females.

Reverse transfer students have largely experienced failure either academically, personally, socially, or otherwise and thus need encouragement in many areas. Therefore, it is recommended that:

1. They be given recognition for every possible achievement in the academic area.
2. They should be given full credit for all courses successfully completed at another accredited institution whether it be a two or four-year college.
3. Very few restrictions as to time limitations, equivalency of courses, types of programs, or other factors should be made. Credit should be given for courses with "D" grades and for courses taken several years ago unless there would be a detrimental effect on the academic major of the student.
4. All courses accepted by the community college should be listed on the students' permanent academic record so that they will be indicated when transcripts are released.

There are very few studies available on reverse transfer students and none on the motivation, goals, and educational aspirations of students who change from one college to another. It is highly recommended that:

1. Future research be done on why students leave one college to attend another. Especially those students who start at a four-year college and later enroll at a two-year college.

2. Research and study be done in the two-year colleges to determine why so few students change from transfer programs to occupational programs, and why so few who remain in four-year transfer programs do not transfer.

3. A great deal of study should be done to determine why highly capable females do not continue four-year college programs.

4. Much more information and counseling must be available about two-year occupational programs at both the two-year and four-year college.

Much of the evidence obtained during this study of reverse transfer students showed that there is no cooperation between two-year and four-year colleges regarding students who reverse transfer. It is essential that communication be a two-way process so that students who transfer into community colleges receive the same consideration as those who transfer out. Therefore, it is recommended that:

1. A communication network be established between four-year and two-year colleges whereby a student who is experiencing academic difficulties at a four-year college can be referred to a two-year community college for counseling, guidance and admission.

2. The spirit of competition between two-year colleges and four-year colleges should become one of cooperation. Future students should be appraised of how various two-year programs are complementary into two-year and four-year colleges.

3. Students who have begun liberal arts programs in four-year colleges should be more readily admitted into two-year occupational programs.

4. Four-year colleges should consider awarding baccalaureate degrees to students who complete two-year occupational programs plus two years of a liberal arts program.

5. More community effort should be put into easing the sociological impact on students who choose a two-year occupational or semi-professional goal. Greater emphasis should be put on the need for skilled personnel in the occupational/semi-professional level in the technological development of today's world. (This should be done via the literature and in the personal contacts with future college students).

6. A concentrated effort should be made by faculty and administrators of both two-year and four-year colleges to improve the prestige, value, and importance of technicians and technologists within the college environment.

REVERSE TRANSFER
THE "RETREAD FUNCTION" OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

INTRODUCTION

Since World War II, the spectacular growth of community colleges has projected them into the public eye. More students enroll as freshmen in two-year colleges now than in four-year collegiate institutions in the United States.

The dramatic surge in their enrollment, produced in part by society's demand for higher education for greater numbers of students and the increased emphasis on technology, caused an expansion in the functions of these colleges. By the middle of the twentieth century, specialized guidance, general/cultural and continuing education, community service, self-improvement courses, semi-professional/career programs, and accessible channels to upper division education comprised the major functions of community colleges.

However, during the last decade, community colleges experienced another educational phenomenon. Many students who initially entered four-year colleges and universities sought transfer admission to two-year colleges. The admission of these transfer students with the subsequent educational experiences offered at the two-year college is somtimes referred to as the "retread function."

The concept of the "retread function" of two-year colleges has been examined in previous studies as the "salvaging" of university students with academic deficiencies who subsequently return to the four-year college. (Kintzer, 1966; Meadows & Ingle, 1967; Muck, 1969)

This study attempted to determine if the current "retread function" in community colleges is a "salvage" function as formerly interpreted, or if a broadened adaptation is justified to include a "second chance" for students without academic deficiencies at the university and for those who do not plan to return to four-year colleges.

Educational efficiency and humanistic concern necessitate that we seek means of insuring that students who transfer to community colleges will have a second chance to find and make progress toward realisitc educational and occupational goals regardless of their former college program or academic record.

A NEW CONCEPT OF THE "RETREAD FUNCTION"

An expanded theoretical interpretation of the "retread function" has developed on the basis of the findings in this study. It is much broader and less limited than earlier interpretations. In this new concept, students are seen as seeking more than

remediation for academic records. They may be seeking less pressure of intense competition, more realistic educational goals, more personal assistance or guidance in selecting educational or occupational objectives, less financial burdens in achieving their goals, or many other adjustments to individual problems.

It is difficult to establish valid reasons why students change colleges, but regardless of the reasons given for why these "reverse transfer" students enrolled in community colleges, it is evident that the community college is attracting increasingly greater numbers of reverse transfer students. The philosophy and purposes as stated by these colleges may be related in some way to the objectives of "reverse transfer" students. Community colleges commonly emphasize the breadth of their educational programs, counseling services, and practical knowledge which is applicable to the changing technological society. Any one of these functions might include the service that these students seek.

In studying characteristics of "reverse transfer" students, they were first grouped on the basis of their academic status at the time of their exit from the university: (1) dismissed, (2) academic probation, (3) clear status, or (4) no action. The "no action" group of students were those who, because no

definite exit status was shown on the academic record, could not be included in any of the other three groups.

The academic achievement of the four groups of students was then studied on the basis of their grade point averages in high school, at the university, and in the community college. To determine their educational destination, they were then regrouped into four categories. They either (1) returned to a four-year university, (2) were still enrolled in a transfer program, (3) were enrolled in a semi-professional/career program, or (4) left the community college.

The academic achievement and educational destination of the various groups were then analyzed and compared to determine if there was a relationship between student characteristics and the "retread function."

This study attempts to describe the characteristics of "reverse transfer" students as well as to determine their destination at the community college. Destination was defined as enrollment or non-enrollment in a college or university at the time the study was made. It is shown by one of the four categories listed above.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

In accepting the responsibility of providing education for all who can profit, community colleges need information about the many sub-groups in their total population. They need to be informed about the characteristics of students in these sub-groups so that they can plan programs which fit social conditions, students' needs, and increasing knowledge. "Reverse transfer" students, one of the sub-groups, can be served more adequately and provided with more essential experiences to clarify their needs and affect positive motivation if their academic achievement and educational destination are known.

Thornton (1966) pointed out that unless a college defines quite clearly the groups in its community whose educational needs it plans to serve, a community college can hardly escape offering a partial or inappropriate education. Medsker (1960) had already stressed that students' characteristics serve as guidelines for policies and procedures in educational institutions. Both men emphasized the diversity of the student body and the variety of educational programs offered by community colleges. However, college personnel appear to know little about the characteristics of this group of students, or to recognize their growth in numbers. In fact, they typically have difficulty even generating data on these students.

With increasing personal and institutional financial problems, there is now a real possibility that increasing numbers of students may transfer from four-year colleges to community colleges. The accomodation of "reverse transfer" students who must be assumed to have the academic ability to complete a four-year college program, but who for various reasons now seek a second college opportunity to achieve their educational and occupational goals, could become a major function of community colleges. The "retread function," therefore, is examined and interpreted to provide a better understanding of "reverse transfer" students, their achievement and educational destination.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of the study was to assess the academic achievements and educational destination of students who transfer from universities to community colleges so that the objectives of the "retread function" of two-year colleges can be more clearly defined.

In assessing academic achievement, grade point averages were used even though they are constantly under attack as less than sufficient to describe students' achievement. They are still the best measure available today for analyzing and comparing student groups academically.

The "reverse transfer" students were studied as a total group, and as four separate groups on the basis of their exit status from the university.

METHODOLOGY

In this comparative study (the object of which is to identify differences between groups of college students) personal and educational characteristics are used as classification variables between groups of both former university and native community college students.

The study group, composed of all the "reverse transfer" students from five state universities who were admitted to five community colleges during one calendar year, is a purposive sample because it was expressly chosen to mirror a larger group of "reverse transfer" students. It is not a random or representative sampling.

The calendar year was designated because of the variation among colleges in the use of semesters and terms. Community colleges, as well as state universities, may use tri-semesters, two-semesters, three-terms, or four-term divisions of the school year. In some colleges the summer session is separate from the regular school year, while in others it is just another semester or term of the regular school year.

State university transfers were used because preliminary investigation showed that the greatest number of four-year transfers who entered community colleges were from public-four year colleges. Further inquiry showed that among public universities the five selected provided a substantial number of the reverse transfers in the state and these five universities represented a broad geographical area.

The comparison group is a sample of native students who reenrolled in the community college in the fall after having been enrolled the previous year. The sample was drawn randomly in proportion to the number of reverse transfers enrolled in each of the five community colleges. A comparison group is necessary to detect effects of the community college experience on the academic achievement and destination of native students.

Both the study group and the comparison group are divided into sub-groups on the basis of the students' destination from or current enrollment at the community college. The sub-groups are students who:

(1) returned to a four-year college
(2) were still enrolled in a transfer program
(3) were still enrolled in a semi-professional/ career program
(4) discontinued a program of higher education and left the community college.

The students' destination was determined from an examination of current college enrollment lists and from the students' transcript requests to other institutions. Colleges almost unanimously require a transcript of credits from transfer students before admission is granted. Therefore, if a student had not made a request to have a transcript sent to another college, and was no longer enrolled in the community college, he was placed in the category of "left college."

METHOD OF ANALYZING THE DATA

A print-out of the data formed the main data bank, while the data deck of cards was used for computation in the analyses. All of the computations used in the statistical analyses were done at the University Computer Center. The deck of IBM cards was used in determining means, standard deviations, and variances.

The analysis of variance technique was used to provide an efficient test of the significance of difference between two or more groups simultaneously. The .05 level of confidence was used to determine if the F ratio of the mean difference was significant. All statistical analyses were made by using high school rank, and grade point averages at the high school, university, and community colleges. The classification variables

included age, sex, and size of high school of the students.

Educational destination was determined and analyzed on the basis of the students' status at the community college when the data was collected. If he was enrolled in a transfer program and had above a 2.0 GPA, it was assumed that he still planned to return to a four-year college. If he had changed to a semi-professional program, it was assumed that he did not plan to return to a four-year college.

Thus, there were two groups with intentions of achieving a four-year college education--those who had already returned to a four-year college and those still enrolled in a transfer program. And conversely, there were two groups not planning to continue a four-year college education--those who had changed to a two-year career program and those who had left college.

The percentage of each group of "reverse transfers" (by their exit status from the university and their destination at the community college in relation to their academic achievement) serve as the basis for the ultimate definition of the "retread function" of community colleges. Garrett (1962) says that it is often feasible and desirable to find the percentage of a given sample which has certain characteristics difficult or impossible

to measure directly.

The "reverse transfers" were not a random sample but a purposive sample and according to Garrett, random sampling formulas can be applied somewhat accurately to purposive samples. Thus, statistical comparisons are made of student characteristics for both the comparison and study group using random sample techniques.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The information gathered about groups of students was keypunched on IBM cards, tabulated by computer, and printed out for an overview prior to analysis. Table I shows the number of reverse transfer (459) and native (245) students from each of the five community colleges used in the study. The community colleges varied in size from an enrollment of 2,800 to 8,000.

TABLE I
DISTRIBUTION OF REVERSE TRANSFER AND NATIVE STUDENTS BY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Community College (coded)	Number of Students		
	Total	Reverse Transfers	Natives
#1	94	62	32
#2	94	62	32
#3	174	107	67
#4	235	157	78
#5	107	71	36
Total	704	459	245

The exit status of the 459 reverse transfer students from the five universities is shown in Table II. It can be seem that 44 percent of the total group were dismissed, 20 percent were on academic probation, 22 percent were on clear academic status, and 14 percent were in a "no action" category (their academic record gave no indication of their exit status).

TABLE II
EXIT STATUS OF REVERSE TRANSFERS FROM FIVE UNIVERSITIES
N=459

University (coded)	Exit Status				
	Dismissed	Probation	Clear	No Action	Total
#1	32	21	13	8	74
#2	48	15	24	4	91
#3	63	19	33	51	166
#4	16	17	11	1	45
#5	39	18	22	4	83
Total Number	198	90	103	68	459
Percentage of Total	44	20	22	14	100

Universities one and four had enrollments of less than 15,000, two and five had enrollments between 15,000 and 25,000; and university three had an enrollment of over 25,000 in the fall of 1968. Of the reverse transfers used in the study, 119 (26 percent) came from the two smallest universities; 166 (36 percent) from the

largest university; and the remaining 174 (38 percent) from the two universities in the 15,000 - 25,000 enrollment range.

LIMITATIONS

The data were taken from the students' permanent records, admissions applications, and personal folders. A problem was encountered in assembling information because of the lack of consistency among colleges in collecting data about students. Desired information could not be obtained on each item from all colleges, but all information was recorded when it was available. For this reason, some of the subsets are larger than others.

Each college uses some degree of computerized record storage, but due to inter-institutional demands and current transformation from one phase of computerization to the next, practically no computer assistance was available for collecting data for this study.

Forms were devised and used for recording information about each student. As his complete file was examined at the community college, information was recorded, and a listing of transfers from each of the universities was compiled. The universities were then visited, and with the permission of the person in charge of admissions or records, the follow-up data were recorded.

High school records were not available for some students. This could have resulted from many causes. Laxity on the part of high school officials in forwarding requested transcripts, insufficient information given when the high school did respond, or lack of communication or follow-up on the part of the university or community college officials are some of the reasons suggested.

One of the common problems encountered in using high school records was the inconsistency in determining overall GPA of graduating seniors, rank in graduating class, and type of program completed. It became necessary to eliminate the consideration of type of high school program when recording data. Thus, the high school grade point average and the class rank do not take into consideration whether the student completed a college preparatory program, a general program, or a special type of program, such as, commerical, vocational, or other.

The cumulative grade point average (GPA) in high school and class rank were used as indices of academic achievement because they are the main objective criteria used in admissions decisions in addition to College Ability Test scores. This information was taken from official transcripts kept in the college registrars' offices.

Classification variables used in the statistical analyses were taken from the permanent records and applications for admission of the college students. Other supplementary information was recorded from these records as factors of interest to the investigator but not for statistical application to the study. It included: marital status of the student, type of high school, number of years since high school graduation, number of other colleges attended, number of years between exit from the university and entrance to the community college, college curriculum, and college ability test scores. An attempt was made to determine the financial needs of "reverse transfer" students.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Both groups of college students are samples taken from state supported educational institutions. For that reason, conclusions drawn were limited to reverse transfer students from public state universities and may not be applicable to transfer students from private four-year colleges or from either public or private two-year colleges.

TABLE III
REVERSE TRANSFER AND NATIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS BY SEX, AGE, AND MARITAL STATUS
(Percentage)

Group	Sex		Age			Marital Status	
	Male	Female	17-21	22-25	Over 25	Married	Single
Reverse Transfers	57	43	72	14	14	20	80
Natives	68	32	72	12	16	20	80

As shown in Table III, the main difference between the two groups of students in these three characteristics is in percentage of males and females (68 percent of the natives and 57 percent of the reverse transfers are males).

TABLE IV
AGE, SEX, AND MARITAL STATUS OF REVERSE TRANSFER STUDENTS BY EXIT STATUS FROM THE UNIVERSITY
(Percentage)

Group	Sex		Age			Marital Status	
	Male	Female	17-21	22-25	Over 25	Married	Single
Dismissed	65	35	71	20	9	15	85
Probation	64	36	75	13	12	19	81
Clear	36	61	69	7	24	34	66
No Action	57	43	78	7	15	19	81
Total Number	262	197	332	63	64	94	365

When the age of the "reverse transfer" group is studied on the basis of their exit status from the university, the group in "clear status" is found to be an older group with a larger percentage of married students. As seen in Table IV, this group is 61 percent female and is the group that is different from the other three groups. About one-fourth are over 25 years of age and one-third are married. Thus, older married "reverse transfer" students show higher achievement at state universities than younger single students.

Almost one-half of the students dismissed from the university or in the "no action" group had earned less than 20 credit hours. This does not mean, however, that they had only attempted 20 hours or less because the credit hours for courses failed are not shown in the total hours. Table V shows that of the groups on clear status and probation about one-third had earned less than 20 hours of credit. It also shows that 15-22 percent of all the reverse transfers had earned over 39 credit hours.

TABLE V
GRADE POINT AVERAGES AND CREDIT HOURS EARNED OF REVERSE TRANSFERS (BY EXIT STATUS) AT THE UNIVERSITY
(Percentage)

Group	University GPA			University Credit Hours			
	0-1.9	2.0-2.9	3.0-3.9	0-19	20-29	30-[illegible]	Over 39
Dismissed	98	2	0	48	22	15	15
Probation	96	4	0	38	34	11	17
Clear	14	68	18	36	25	17	22
No Action	100	0	0	48	18	12	22
Total Number	367	74	18	200	113	65	81

Most community colleges consider students who have earned over 25 hours to be sophomores at their institution. Therefore, it can be seen that among the total reverse transfer group, almost as large a group would still be classified freshmen as sophomores.

In looking at the program of choice of reverse transfer students at both the university and the community college (as shown in Table VI), one notes that by far the largest percentage of students were enrolled in liberal arts and science, education, or business. In fact, 87 percent of the total group had been enrolled in these three programs at the university and 83 percent were still enrolled in the same three curricula at the community college. Seventy-seven percent of the natives were also

enrolled in these three curricula, which are basically transfer programs from which students continue on to a four-year college program.

TABLE VI
ENROLLMENT OF REVERSE TRANSFER AND NATIVE STUDENTS BY CURRICULUM
(Percentage)

Group	Curriculum				
	Liberal Arts and Science	Education	Business	Engineering	Other
UNIVERSITY					
Dismissed	43	23	20	6	8
Probation	53	22	16	4	5
Clear	41	29	15	2	13
No Action	33	27	14	2	24
Total-Reverse Transfers	45	24	18	2	11
COMMUNITY COLLEGE				Semi-Prof. *	
Dismissed	39	27	19	11	4
Probation	40	24	18	17	1
Clear	36	29	13	21	1
No Action	30	33	16	17	4
Total-Reverse Transfers	36	30	17	14	3
Natives	39	21	17	22	1

*It will be noted that the percentage shown in this column is for semi-professional programs and not engineering. This includes all the programs designed for two-year completion at the community college.

The two-year programs include a wide and diverse range of opportunities. Curricula shown in community college catalogs include; accounting, business management, retailing and marketing management, commercial art, nursing, secretarial, data processing, supervising and coordination of data processing, law enforcement, and many technologies such as, drafting and design, electronics, chemical and mechanical, and industrial engineering technology.

The question now arises that if these two-year programs are available, why do a large percentage of students continue in programs designed for four-year college completion and then not complete them? This question cannot be answered in this study, but it is obvious that in changing programs most "reverse transfer" students do not change their level of aspiration from four-year to two-year college graduation and subsequently earlier employment.

In summary, the educational characteristics of reverse transfer students at time of admission to the community college show two-thirds of them moving directly from high school to the university and then to the community college with no recess. Of the one-third who had graduated from high school more than two years earlier, less than ten percent had attended more than one other college.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Before analyzing and comparing the academic achievement of the four groups of reverse transfers and the native students at the community college, it is worthwhile to view their mean grade points and standard deviations in relation to the same measures at the high school and university. Thus, Table VII is presented to show such a comparison.

It will be noted in the following table that the only group having a mean grade point above the mean of the total group at both the university and the community college is the group on clear status. And, although the three groups having below a 2.0 at the university had the same grade point at the community college, they were not much below the mean for the total group. The similarity in standard deviations further substantiate the minor variation in their academic achievement at both colleges.

TABLE VII

MEAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY & HIGH SCHOOL GRADE POINTS & STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR REVERSE TRANSFER STUDENTS BY EXIT STATUS FROM THE UNIVERSITY & FOR NATIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Group		Comm. College GPA		Univ. GPA		High School GPA	
	Total Number	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Dismissed	198	2.5	.51	1.4	.38	2.4	.47
Probation	90	2.5	.56	1.6	.32	2.5	.48
Clear	102	3.1	.46	2.6	.53	2.7	.50
No Action	69	2.5	.55	1.7	.29	2.8	.48
Total	459	2.6	.53	1.8	.38	2.6	.48
Natives	245	2.4	.62			2.3	.36

In summarizing the academic achievement of reverse transfer students at the community college, it can be stated that over four-fifths of the total group have satisfactory academic records (over a 2.0 grade point average). The mean grade point of the total group is 2.6 with a standard deviation of .53. Even though there is no significant difference among the four groups in their academic achievement, the clear status group does have a higher mean grade point.

Reverse transfer students have a higher mean grade point than native students (although it is not significantly higher), but females in both groups do have significantly higher grade point averages than males.

EDUCATIONAL PERSISTENCE AND DESTINATION AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

To identify the students who had actually returned to a four-year college, all requests for transcripts of credit made by students were reviewed and a follow-up study was made. Of the 459 reverse transfer students, 87 (19 percent) had been readmitted to state universities.

Of the 118 students still enrolled in the community colleges, 87 (19 percent) were enrolled in transfer programs and 31 (7 percent) were enrolled in semi-professional two-year programs. Two hundred fifty-four (55 percent) of the total group had left college without completing a program.

A much larger percentage of the reverse transfer students who returned to a four-year college were male (70 percent) than female (30 percent). This is also true of the students in the group who are still enrolled in a transfer program (62 percent are male and 38 percent are female). It appears that there is greater persistence on the part of males to continue a four-year college program.

TABLE VIII

SEX, AGE, AND MARITAL STATUS OF REVERSE TRANSFER STUDENTS BY DESTINATION AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE (By Percentage)

Group	Sex		Age			Marital Status	
	Male	Female	17-21	22-25	Over 25	Single	Married
Returned to a four-year college	70	30	81	14	5	84	16
Still enrolled in a transfer program	62	38	70	9	21	71	29
Still enrolled in a semi-professional program	51	49	74	10	16	71	29
Left college*	54	46	70	15	15	84	16
Total	57	43	72	14	14	80	20

*Less than two percent had sent transcripts to out-of-state colleges or in-state private colleges where follow-up was not feasible so they are included in this group.

However, this is also true of native community college students as shown in Table IX, where 67 percent of those who entered a four-year college were males and 59 percent of those still enrolled in a transfer program were males.

TABLE IX
SEX, AGE, AND MARITAL STATUS OF NATIVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS BY DESTINATION AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
(By Percentage)

Group	Sex			Age			Marital Status	
	Total	Male	Female	17-21	22-25	Over 25	Single	Married
Transferred to a four-year college	17	67	33	84	2	14	90	10
Still enrolled in a transfer program	16	59	41	67	2	31	67	33
Still enrolled in a semi-professional program	9	38	62	72	4	24	75	25
Left college	58	70	30	79	11	10	75	25
Total	100	68	32	72	12	16	80	20

Of the 31 reverse transfers who had changed to a semi-professional/career program, almost equal percentages were male and female. In the native group, only one-third of the students in semi-professional programs were males. There appears to be a disproportionate percentage of native community college females in semi-professional programs. This may be due to a heavy enrollment in secretarial, nursing, and data processing, or it may result from the fact that many of the male students in semi-professional programs are either part-time or evening students and so they would not be shown in this study.

Also, it is quite common for many of the male students in semi-professional curricula to discontinue college in order to accept employment without completing the entire program at the community college. However, in looking at the curricular enrollment of both groups (reverse transfers and natives) who had left the community college one finds that 80 percent were enrolled in transfer programs. Therefore, if every student enrolled in a semi-professional program who left the community college had accepted employment in a semi-professional area, it would still be a very small percentage of the total group.

Almost half of the reverse transfers who left the community college were females, and 84 percent of those who left were single. It is possible that some of this group discontinued their education to become housewives and mothers, and it is possible that some will return at a later date to complete a college program.

A larger percentage of the single and younger students had re-entered a four-year college, and larger percentages of older and married students were still enrolled in community college programs. This is especially true of the "over 25" age group, which in terms of numbers is a small part

of the total group. But, it is quite evident that the reverse transfer students who return to a four-year college are mainly young (under 21 years) single men.

The most outstanding fact shown in the previous two tables is that an extremely large percentage (55-58) of each group had left college and an extremely small percentage (7-9) had changed to semi-professional two-year programs. This is an indication that both reverse transfer students and native community college students intend to either complete a four-year college program or leave college. One does not know how many return at a later date to continue their educational program, however.

Serious concern must be felt about the fact that even though all of the reverse transfer students who were selected by the state universities as students with academic potential to complete a four-year college program, over half do not even complete a two-year program leading to employment. All of the two-year semi-professional programs in two-year colleges are designed to provide marketable skills needed in many business, industrial, and service areas. Many of them lead to jobs where salaries are comparable to or above beginning salaries for many four-year college graduates. This situation leads to many

questions about the "retread function" in community colleges. What is its purpose? What are community colleges doing for the students who they accept as possible "retreads"? Or, are the community colleges even recognizing "retread" as one of their functions?

It might be assumed that most of the students who had left the community college had experienced further academic difficulties at the community college. And, it might be assumed that those who had returned to the four-year college had achieved higher grade point averages than the other groups. However, when one looks at the mean grade points and standard deviations of the various groups, this is not the case.

Table X shows that the mean grade point of the group in semi-professional/careeer programs is higher than for any other group in both high school and community college. However, it must be noted that this is a much smaller group in number than any of the other groups. And, it must be remembered that high school grade point averages were not available for almost 30 percent of the students, and of those tested the difference varied from only 2.7 to 2.6.

TABLE X

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY, AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADE POINTS FOR REVERSE TRANSFER STUDENTS BY DESTINATION AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Group		High School		University		Community College	
	Total Number	Mean GPA	SD	Mean GPA	SD	Mean GPA	SD
Returned to a four-year college	87	2.57	.45	1.81	.45	2.73	.46
Still enrolled in transfer program	87	2.58	.56	1.68	.59	2.68	.71
Semi-Professional program	31	2.60	.50	1.78	.62	2.79	.62
Left college	254	2.54	.55	1.72	.56	2.52	1.52
Total	459	2.60	.48	1.80	.38	2.61	.53

The mean grade point of each group of reverse transfer students at the community college on the basis of their exit status from the university and their destination at the community college is presented in Table XI.

TABLE XI
MEAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADE POINT OF REVERSE TRANSFER STUDENTS BY EXIT STATUS FROM THE UNIVERSITY AND DESTINATION AT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Exit Status			Returned to Four-Year College		Enrolled in Transfer Program		Enrolled in Semi-Prof. Program		Left College	
	Total Number	Total GPA	No.	GPA	No.	GPA	No.	GPA	No.	GPA
Dismissed	198	2.5	46	2.7	28	2.4	12	2.7	112	2.4
Probation	90	2.4	11	2.7	21	2.4	7	2.6	51	2.3
Clear	102	3.0	18	2.9	26	3.2	7	3.3	51	2.8
No Action	69	2.7	12	2.5	12	2.7	5	2.8	40	2.9
Total	459	2.6	87	2.7	87	2.7	31	2.8	254	2.5

It can be seen that there is very little difference in community college mean grade point among the reverse transfer groups on the basis of their destination at the community college, even though there is greater variation within the groups on the basis of their exit status from the university.

Among the groups of students who returned to a four-year college, the greatest variation is only .4 point, which is found between the "no action" and the "clear status" group. The dismissed and the probationary groups have almost the same grade point average in each classification based on destination at the community college, and they have consistently lower mean grade points than the two groups on "clear

status" and "no action."

The two groups (probation and dismissed) who left the community college without completing a program show some indication of having academic problems. Their mean grade points of 2.4 and 2.3 with standard deviations of .90 and .85 show that about one-fifth of the total group of reverse transfers could have had less than a 2.0 grade average at the community college. These students undoubtedly could not have returned to the four-year college because of their academic status, but it is quite probable that they could have completed a two-year college program.

The evidence in Table XI makes it quite clear that regardless of what the prior academic achievement of reverse transfer students had been, and regardless of their destination, they are academically successful while enrolled in the community college.

The one-third of the reverse transfer students who left the university with academic deficiencies and then repaired their academic records so they could return to the four-year college are representative of the "salvaged" students described in earlier studies. (Kintzer, Meadows, Ingle, and Muck)

The fifty percent or more who left the community college without completing a college program are the students which this study is concerned about. They are the students who need a "second chance" that includes more than the opportunity to improve their academic records.

Of the 254 students who left college, four-fifths had been in academic difficulty at the university. Forty-two percent had been dismissed from the university, 20 percent were on academic probation, 20 percent were on "clear status", and 18 percent were in the "no action" group. The percentage of each group who left college was almost identical with the percentage which made up the total reverse transfer group. Therefore, one can conclude that there is no relationship between the students' exit status from the university and their discontinuance of a college program.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The findings in this study do not add a great deal to the definition of the "retread function". More questions are raised than are answered. Since the data showed that the academic achievement and educational destination of "reverse transfer" students and native community college students are

not significantly different, even though the "reverse transfers" have higher academic potential as shown by high school grades and college ability test scores, why are no greater percentage of them "salvaged" by the community colleges?

The fact that over three-fourths of the "reverse transfer" and native students remain enrolled in transfer programs, but less than one-third actually transfer to a four-year college may indicate that students are selecting unrealistic goals. Considering the many semi-professional two-year college programs offered by community colleges, why do not a larger percentage of the students change to these programs rather than leave college? This may indicate the need for greater information about these alternate programs, or grester need of the students for assistance in selecting career goals.

It is entirely possible that student personnel services are not functioning properly to provide these students with the assistance that they need. It is also possible that external factors, such as lack of finances, lack of motivation, or uncertainty about educational goals affect students' success and education destination. But, until more is known about these factors, it is impossible to understand why a "second chance"

results in such a high percentage of loss of academically successful students.

There are strong implications that much more research is needed to determine how "reverse transfer" students can be "salvaged". Research about student motivation, goal selection, and educational aspirations of students might provide evidence upon which college personnel could base new programs of assistance to students. If research could determine what the problems of these students are, a larger percentage of them might be "salvaged."

The sex variable showed that females of both groups have higher academic records than males but show less persistence in transferring to a four-year college which may mean that they need greater encouragement and motivation, or that they leave on a temporary basis and will return at a later time to continue their education. Follow-up studies which determine why students leave the community college and the university might give some insight into means of "salvaging" a larger percentage of the female students.

Even though the group of "reverse transfer" students who left the university on clear academic status showed few academic problems at the high school or the community college, no greater percentage were "salvaged" than in the dismissed or probationary groups. This suggests that community colleges are not devising effective means of obtaining or using information about groups of students within their college population as a basis for providing services or assistance to students.

The question can be raised about whether community colleges are even recognizing the "retread function" they are performing. If they are admitting students who transfer from a state university, should they not be concerned about services or assistance to these students?

At this point, the writer would like to suggest some theoretical and practical considerations that emerge as a result of the study.

The study indicates that not much is being done at the community colleges to "salvage" the "reverse transfer" students. The "retread function" may need to be interpreted as a challenge to the counselors in the student personnel services

of community colleges. It appears as if it is not so much that counseling has failed these students as it is that counselors have not addressed themselves to the problems of these students.

Group and peer counseling might have positive effects in helping students achieve educational success. Grouping students into interest groups or other categorical groups and then providing counselors or qualified students to help them evaluate their educational progress, define some of their problems, and make decisions about future educational goals might open some doors to alternative programs.

If instruments of research are developed to measure students' motivation and educational aspirations, as well as their academic potential, it might also be possible to use various techniques in assisting students to achieve educational goals.

Consciously organized information sessions about two-year semi-professional college programs might also bring to students' attention the educational alternatives that they need. Students without academic problems at the community college may be seeking a shorter period of education leading to employment, or they may lack the necessary resources to return to a four-year college program.

Community colleges might also take the leadership in developing interinstitutional programs with the universities and high schools. Arrangements might be made with four-year colleges so that students having academic difficulties could be given the option to transfer to a two-year college in lieu of dismissal.

And, to ease sociological pressures on high school graduates to enroll in universities before ascertaining their real potential in college, community-wide programs might be developed which made all interested members of the community aware of the programs available at the community college. Community efforts could be enlisted to develop a better understanding of the role of semi-professional personnel in the technological development of today's world. By this means, students as well as their parents might come to realize the importance of semi-professional programs so essential in modern technology.

However, no department or division within a college or university can assume the responsibility for student development alone. It would take the understanding and support of the personnel in all student services, the faculty, the college administrators, and the community at large to plan programs

which would "salvage" more of the "reverse transfer" students and make the "retread function" a viable and necessary part of the total college operation.

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